

2021 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 62

BY REPRESENTATIVE BRASS

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Louisiana Community and Technical College System to design, implement, and monitor training programs to advance commercial driver training standards and safety commensurate with the federally proposed DRIVE-Safe Act.

WHEREAS, the trucking industry faces complex workforce challenges in an increasingly competitive global marketplace; and

WHEREAS, the American Transportation Research Institute reported on October 27, 2020 that a driver shortage has been the top concern in the trucking industry for the fourth time in a row; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Community and Technical College System was created for the purpose of designing, implementing, and monitoring training programs to meet specific workforce training needs that address the current and future economic needs of the state and promote student success; and

WHEREAS, the primary objective of the commercial driver training program is to increase opportunities for members of minority groups, women, and other populations; including individuals with disabilities that are underrepresented in Louisiana's highway construction and transportation industries; and

WHEREAS, commercial driver training and apprenticeship programs have been proven to provide valuable driving experience; to reduce recklessness; to help prepare the driver for real-life driving situations that may be experienced on the road; and to correct and to identify poor driving behaviors; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration regulations, specifically 49 CFR 391.11, require commercial motor vehicle drivers to be at least twenty-one years old to drive interstate commerce; and

WHEREAS, 49 CFR 383.71 provide the requirements for commercial motor vehicle drivers to obtain a commercial learner's permit at eighteen years old; and

WHEREAS, most states, including Louisiana, allow eighteen through twenty year old drivers to operate in intrastate commerce; and

WHEREAS, companion bills were introduced in the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate called the "Developing Responsible Individuals for a Vibrant Economy Act" (DRIVE-Safe Act, H.R. 1374), which proposed to lower the age requirement for interstate drivers to eighteen, as long as drivers under the age of twenty-one participated in an apprenticeship program; and

WHEREAS, the apprenticeship program would include separate 120-hour and 280-hour probationary periods, during which eighteen through twenty year old commercial driver's license holders would operate a commercial motor vehicle under the supervision of an experienced driver and must achieve specific performance benchmarks before advancing; and

WHEREAS, the apprenticeship program would permit nineteen and twenty year old commercial drivers who have operated commercial motor vehicles in intrastate commerce for a minimum of one year and 25,000 miles; and

WHEREAS, participants would not be allowed to operate vehicles hauling passengers or hazardous materials or special configuration vehicles; such as, doubles, triples, cargo tanks; and

WHEREAS, participants would drive vehicles equipped with active-braking collision mitigation systems, forward-facing video event capture, and speed limiters set to sixty-five miles per hour; and

WHEREAS, participants will meet specific program qualifications and must not have any disqualifications, suspensions, or license revocations within the past two years and not be under any out-of-service order; and

WHEREAS, a commercial driver training and apprenticeship program coupled with the DRIVE-Safe Act, if enacted, would raise the bar for training standards and safety technology far above what has been asked of the thousands of under twenty-one year old commercial motor vehicle drivers who are currently legally driving in Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, the training and apprenticeship program is envisioned to create a safety centered process for identifying, training, and empowering the safest, most responsible eighteen through twenty year olds to more fully participate in the trucking industry; and

WHEREAS, the training and apprenticeship program will create enormous opportunities for countless Louisianans seeking a high paying profession without the burden of debt that comes with a four year degree.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Louisiana Community and Technical College System to design, implement, and monitor training programs to advance commercial driver training standards and safety commensurate with the federally proposed DRIVE-Safe Act.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Community and Technical College System shall submit a written report to the House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works and the Senate Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works detailing its findings and recommendations prior to March 1, 2022.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Louisiana Community and Technical College System.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE